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Depend upon it, the lovers of freedom will be free. —EDMUND BURKE

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THE PROJECT OF MAN

FROM the Buddha to the lowliest of disciples, the search for the Path begins with inexpressible and undefinable longings. These longings are spiritual in essence and origin, yet, since embodied egos are not simple spiritual essences, unclothed centers of consciousness, but are garbed in the lesser selves of the hierarchy of psychic intelligence, the connatus of the Self is repeated at each level of being, a veritable fugue of aspiration.

And so it follows, as the *Voice of the Silence* intimates, that when the principles of man's nature are harmonized, the world about us seems to smile upon the enterprise which moves toward knowing and self-knowledge. Then, "The road that leads therethrough is straight and smooth and green," with birds of the field "chanting success to fearless pilgrims."

There is both confirmation and deception in this; confirmation of the correspondence between the longings of the soul and those of the psychic nature; but deception in the suggestion that this correspondence is an identity. For the longings of the soul can never be assuaged at any of the way-stations which give a feeling of completion to the psychic nature.

It is a fateful condition of life that the Self and its vehicles can never reach a joint and common perfection. For the Self, being free, is unable to tolerate the static bliss of any perfection, and is ever moved to hurry onward, as though spurred by an unrest as deep and uncontrollable as the ceaseless motion of Space itself.

So, perhaps, arise all the conflicts which harass from within—the tortured self-questionings and doubts of what we are about. The intellectual account of the pilgrimage of the monad, instructing that the growth of the soul is a series of progressive awakenings, each bringing the feeling that here, at last, is "reality," may supply a reasonable pattern of explanation, but this diagrammatic outline of passage through the psychic states cannot of itself convey the anguish of mutilated feelings. The despondency of Arjuna gives another kind of instruction, not once, but many times. It is as though the capacity to feel pain must also be exhausted, much as the formulas of intellectual description have to be extended and computed to their last possibility, before the projections of the mind can melt into unison with the throbbing declarations of the heart.

And all the while, the witness of these motions of self-conscious life stands to one side, involved yet not involved. At the apex of a passion or in the throes of a personal agony, the witness is present, not as a judge, nor even as a particular friend, but with the vast impersonality of an unscalable height, yet with its presence, and something of ours, at the very top.

There is not the sense of waiting, for the witness has all eternity, and how shall he wait, across cycles without end? And yet there is waiting, too, for each moment brings its magic conjunction of time and eternity—the dimensionless moment with dimensionless duration. It is the uninvited and unsought ecstacy which resolves the longings of the ego and restores without change or movement that which was never lost.

It is not goodness or performance in goodness that bring this resolution. For men are good because they think they *ought* to be good, and this is doubtless necessary; and men are honest, or try to be, because they think they *ought* to be honest, as, indeed, the psychic nature must long for the virtues, or suffer a painful oblivion.

But the Self knows nothing of "ought," or "ought not." The Self knows only the Self, and practices, when permitted, only the law of identity. So that a man in whom the Self has found freedom is a man without either righteousness or unrighteousness. He is beyond the opposites which harass and agonize the psychic nature with dreams and frustrations. There is no striving in the Self. There is not even Brotherhood in the Self, for there is no division, no parts to learn brotherhood, in the Self. The Self is One.

Thus the lovers of men, the wise in whom the Self has no confinement, have always taken delight in the unintentional splendor of Nature. They have seen in the flower the image of unhungering perfection, in which limit is not an irksome bound but a face of peaceful beauty. "Grow," they say "as the flower grows." And we wonder what they mean, knowing well that the flower cares nothing for growth; forgetting, perhaps, that this may be the explanation of the flower's beauty.

And so it is that the wise find rich companionship in the solitude of wilds and barrens, where the earth displays crystalline excellence and every desolate shelf of rock harbors life that subsists upon patience and takes solace from the stars that it lacks the luxurious growth of tropical islands.

There is a portion of man which must strive, which must suffer and turn upon the wheel of life. But unless the unstriving, always-realized aspect of man can find access to the mind of the striver, his efforts will sour and his hopes break to fragments against the cliffs of futility.

Our longings, then, both mock and beckon. To learn to long and to be at peace, to strive as though one must attain, yet all the while rest in the greatness which is already ours: this is the project of man.

Likeness of Good Men

The person in an individual is the man in him, the thing that politics respects when it is wise and good. It is what the doctrine of equality respects. It is the medium through which individuals understand one another; it is the source of language and the explanation of love. And it solves many mysteries of the thing called personality. Individuality is less powerful; it is uniqueness, it is eccentricity, it is something we lack tongue to praise. He who is most a person is, strangely, the least personal of men; he is least hide-bound by a notion he has of his own integrity. He is surprised when he hears of that, having all the while been occupied by the world's variety. There are many things he prefers to himself and tries to be. What he tries most steadily to be is a man. And when we praise him we praise his humanity. We compliment individuals; we praise persons for the virtues in them which they share with other men. An old way of saying that is that good men—that is, men—tend to be alike.

—Mark Van Doren

BUDDHISM, CHRISTIANITY AND PHALLICISM

WORKS by specialists and scholars have to be treated with a certain respect, due to science. But such works as Payne Knight's *On the Worship of Priapus,* and the *Ancient Faiths,* etc., of Dr. Inman, were merely the precursory drops of the shower of phallicism that burst upon the reading public in the shape of General Forlong's *Rivers of Life.* Very soon lay writers followed the torrent, and Hargrave Jennings' charming volume, *The Rosicrucians,* was superseded by his *Phallicism.*

As an elaborate account of this work—that hunts up sexual worship, from the grossest forms of idolatry up to its most refined and hidden symbolism in Christianity—would better suit a newspaper review than a journal like the present, it becomes necessary to state at once the reason it is noticed at all. Were Theosophists entirely to ignore it, *Phallicism*[1] and such-like works would be used some day against Theosophy. Mr. Hargrave Jennings' last production was written, in every probability, to arrest its progress—erroneously confounded as it is by many with Occultism, pure and simple, and even with Buddhism itself. *Phallicism* appeared in 1884, just at a time when all the French and English papers heralded the arrival of a few Theosophists from India as the advent of Buddhism in Christian Europe—the former in their usual flippant way, the latter with an energy that might have been worthy of a better cause, and might have been more appropriately directed against "sexual worship at home," according to certain newspaper revelations. Whether rightly or wrongly, public rumour attributes this "mystic" production of Mr. Hargrave Jennings to the advent of Theosophy. However it may be, and whosoever may have inspired the author, his efforts were crowned with success only in one direction. Notwithstanding that he proclaims himself, modestly enough, "the first introducer of the grand philosophical problem of this mysterious Buddhism," and pronounces his work "undoubtedly new and original," declaring in the same breath that all the "previous great men and profound thinkers (before himself) labouring through

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NOTE.—This article by H. P. Blavatsky was first published in *Lucifer* for July 1896, and was reprinted in THEOSOPHY for February, 1918.

[1] *Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial, Heathen and Christian*: its connection with the Rosicrucians and the Gnostics and its foundation in Buddhism.

the ages (in this direction) have worked in vain," it is easy to prove the author mistaken. His "enthusiasm" and self-laudation may be very sincere, and no doubt his labours were "enormous," as he says; they have nevertheless led him on an entirely false track, when he asserts that:

"These physiological contests (about the mysteries of animal generation) . . . induced in the reflective wisdom of the earliest thinkers, laid the sublime foundations of the phallic worship. They led to violent schisms in religion, and to Buddhism."

Now it is precisely Buddhism which was the first religious system in history that sprang up with the determinate object of putting an end to all the male Gods and to the degrading idea of a sexual personal Deity being the generator of mankind and the Father of men.

His book, the author assures us: "Comprises within the limit of a modest octavo all that can be known of the doctrines of the Buddhists, Gnostics, and Rosicrucians as connected with phallicism."

In this he errs again, and most profoundly, or—which would be still worse—he is trying to mislead the reader by filling him with disgust for such "mysteries." His work is "new and original" in so far as it explains with enthusiastic and reverential approval the strong phallic element in the *Bible;* for, as he says, "Jehovah undoubtedly signifies the universal male," and he calls Mary Magdalen before her conversion the "female St. Michael," as a mystical antithesis and paradox. No one, truly, in Christian countries before him has ever had the moral courage to speak so openly as he does of the phallic element with which the Christian Church (the Roman Catholic) is honeycombed, and this is the author's chief desert and credit. But all the merit of the boasted "conciseness and brevity" of his "modest octavo" disappears on its becoming the undeniable and evident means of leading the reader astray under the most false impressions; especially as very few, if any, of its readers will follow or even share his "enthusiasm . . . converted out of the utmost original disbelief of these wondrously stimulating and beautiful phallic beliefs." Nor is it fair or honest to give out a portion of the truth, without allowing any room for a palliative, as is done in the cases of Buddha and Christ. That which the former did in India, Jesus repeated in Palestine. Buddhism was a passionate reactionary protest against the phallic worship that led every nation first to the adoration of a *personal* God, and finally to black magic, and the same object was aimed at by the Naza-

rene Initiate and prophet. Buddhism escaped the curse of black magic by keeping clear of a personal male God in its religious system; but this conception reigning supreme in the so-called monotheistic countries, black magic—the fiercer and stronger for being utterly disbelieved in by its most ardent votaries, unconscious perhaps of its presence among them—is drawing them nearer and nearer to the maëlstrom of every nation given to sin, or to sorcery, pure and simple. No Occultist believes in the devil of the Church, the traditional Satan; every student of Occultism and every Theosophist believes in black magic, and in dark, natural powers present in the worlds, if he accept the white or divine science as an actual fact on our globe. Therefore one may repeat in full confidence the remark made by Cardinal Ventura on the devil—only applying it to black magic:

"The greatest victory of Satan was gained on that day when he succeeded in making himself denied."

It may be said further, that "black magic reigns over Europe as an all-powerful, though unrecognized, autocrat," its chief conscious adherents and practical servants being found in the Roman Church, and its unconscious practitioners in the Protestant. The whole body of the so-called "privileged" classes of society in Europe and America is honeycombed with unconscious black magic, or sorcery of the vilest character.

But Christ is not responsible for the mediæval and the modern Christianity fabricated in His name. And if the author of *Phallicism* be right in speaking of the transcendental sexual worship in the Roman Church and calling it "true, although doubtless of profound mystical strictly 'Christian' paradoxical construction," he is wrong in calling it the "celestial or Theosophical doctrine of the unsexual, transcendental phallicism," for all such words strung together become meaningless by annulling each other. "Paradoxical" indeed must be that "construction" which seeks to show the phallic element in "the tomb of the Redeemer," and the yonic in Nirvana, besides finding a Priapus in the "Word made Flesh" or the *Logos*. But such is the "Priapomania" of our century that even the most ardent professed Christians have to admit the element of phallicism in their dogmas, lest they should be twitted with it by their opponents.

This is not meant as criticism, but simply as the defence of real, true magic, confined by the author of *Phallicism* to the "divine magic of

generation." "Phallic ideas," he says, are "discovered to be the foundation of all religions."

In this there is nothing "new" or "original." Since state religions came into existence, there was never an Initiate or philosopher, a Master or disciple, who was ignorant of it. Nor is there any fresh discovery in the fact of Jehovah having been worshipped by the Jews under the shape of "phallic stones" (unhewn)—of being, in short, as much of a phallic God as any other Lingam, which fact has been no mystery from the days of Dupuis. That he was pre-eminently a male deity—a Priapus—is now proven absolutely and without show of useless mysticism, by Ralston Skinner of Cincinnati, in his wonderfully clever and erudite volume, *The Source of Measures,* published some years ago, in which he demonstrates the fact on mathematical grounds, completely versed, as he seems to be, in kabalistic numerical calculations. What then makes the author of *Phallicism* say that in his book will be found "a more complete and more connected account than has hitherto appeared of the different forms of the . . . peculiar veneration (not idolatry), generally denominated the phallic worship"? "No previous writer has disserted so fully," he adds with modest reserve, "upon the shades and varieties of this singular ritual, or traced up so completely its mysterious blendings with the ideas of the philosophers as to what lies remotely in nature in regard to the origin of the history of the human race."

There is one thing really "original" and "new" in *Phallicism,* and it is this: while noticing and underlining the most filthy rites connected with phallic worship among every "heathen" nation, those of the Christians are idealized, and a veil of a most mystic fabric is thrown over them. At the same time the author accepts and insists upon Biblical chronology. Thus he assigns to the Chaldean Tower of Babel—"that magnificent monster, 'upright,' defiant phallus," as he puts it—an age "soon after the Flood"; and to the Pyramids "a date not long after the foundation of the Egyptian monarchy of Misraim, the son of Ham, 2188 B.C." The chronological views of the author of *The Rosicrucians* seem to have greatly changed of late. There is a mystery about his book, difficult, yet not wholly impossible to fathom, which may be summed up in the words of the Comte de Gasparin with regard to the works on Satan by the Marquis de Mirville: "Everything goes to show a work which is essentially an act, and has the value of a collective labour."

But this is of no moment to the Theosophists. That which is of real importance is his misleading statement, which he supports on Wilford's authority, that the legendary war that began in India and spread all over the globe was caused by a diversity of opinion upon the relative "superiority of the male or female emblem . . . in regard of the idolatrous magic worship. . . . These physiological disputes led to violent schisms in religion and even to bloody and devastating wars, which have wholly passed out of the history . . . or have never been recorded in history . . . remaining only as a tradition."

This is denied point-blank by initiated Brahmanas.

If the above be given on Col. Wilford's authority, then the author of *Phallicism* was not fortunate in his selection. The reader has only to turn to Max Müller's *Science of Religion* to find therein the detailed history of Col. Wilford becoming—and very honestly confessing to the fact—the victim of Brahmanical mystification with regard to the alleged presence of Shem, Ham, and Japhet in the Puranas. The true history of the dispersion and the cause of the great war are very well known to the initiated Brahmanas, only they will not tell it, as it would go directly against themselves and their supremacy over those who believe in a personal God and Gods. It is quite true that the origin of every religion is based on the dual powers, male and female, of absract Nature, but these in their turn were the radiations or emanations of the sexless, infinite, absolute Principle, the only One to be worshipped in spirit and not with rites; whose immutable laws no words of prayer or propitiation can change, and whose sunny or shadowy, beneficent or maleficent influence, grace or curse, under the form of Karma, can be determined only by the actions—not by the empty supplications—of the devotee. This was the religion, the One Faith of the whole of primitive humanity, and was that of the "Sons of God," the B'ne Elohim of old. This faith assured to its followers the full possession of transcendental psychic powers, of the truly divine magic. Later on, when mankind fell, in the natural course of its evolution "into generation," *i.e.,* into human creation and procreation, and carrying down the subjective process of Nature from the plane of spirituality to that of matter—made in its selfish and animal adoration of self a God of the human organism, and worshipped self in this objective personal Deity, then was black magic initiated. This magic or sorcery is based upon, springs from, and has the very life and soul of selfish impulse; and thus was gradually developed the idea of a per-

sonal God. The first "pillar of unhewn stone," the first objective "*sign* and witness to the Lord," creative, generative, and the "Father of man," was made to become the archetype and progenitor of the long series of male (vertical) and female (horizontal) Deities, of pillars, and cones. Anthropomorphism in religion is the direct generator of and stimulus to the exercise of black, left-hand magic. And it was again merely a feeling of selfish national exclusiveness—not even patriotism—of pride and self-glorification over all other nations, that could lead an Isaiah to see a difference between the one living God and the idols of the neighboring nations. In the day of the great "change," Karma, whether called personal or impersonal Providence, will see no difference between those who set an altar (horizontal) to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar (vertical) at the border thereof (*Is.* XIX, 19) and they "who seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards"—for all this is human, hence devilish black magic.

It is then the latter magic, coupled with anthropomorphic worship, that caused the "Great War" and was the reason for the "Great Flood" of Atlantis; for this reason also the Initiates—those who had remained true to primeval Revelation—formed themselves into separate communities, keeping their magic or religious rites in the profoundest secrecy. The caste of the Brahmanas, the descendants of the "mind-born Rishis and Sons of Brahma" dates from those days, as also do the "Mysteries."

Natural sciences, archæology, theology, philosophy, all have been forced in *The Secret Doctrine* to give their evidence in support of the teachings herein again propounded. *Vox audita perit; litera scripta manet.* Published admissions cannot be made away with—even by an opponent: they have been made good use of. Had I acted otherwise, *The Secret Doctrine,* from the first chapter to the last, would have amounted to uncorroborated personal affirmations. Scholars and some of the latest discoveries in various departments of science being brought to testify to what might have otherwise appeared to the average reader as the most preposterous hypotheses based upon unverified assertions, the rationality of these will be made clearer. Occult teaching will at last be examined in the light of science, physical as well as spiritual.

THE MAHATMAS AS IDEALS AND FACTS

A VISITOR from one of the other planets of the solar system who might learn the term *Mahatma* after arriving here would certainly suppose that the etymology of the word undoubtedly inspired the believers in *Mahatmas* with the devotion, fearlessness, hope, and energy which such an ideal should arouse in those who have the welfare of the human race at heart. Such a supposition would be correct in respect to some, but the heavenly visitor after examining all the members of the Theosophical Society could not fail to meet disappointment when the fact was clear to him that many of the believers were afraid of their own ideals, hesitated to proclaim them, were slothful in finding arguments to give reasons for their hope, and all because the wicked and scoffing materialistic world might laugh at such a belief.

The whole sweep, meaning, and possibility of evolution are contained in the word *Mahatma. Maha* is "great," *Atma* is *"soul,"* and both compounded into one mean those great souls who have triumphed before us not because they are made of different stuff and are of some strange family, but just because they are of the human race. Reincarnation, karma, the sevenfold division, retribution, reward, struggle, failure, success, illumination, power, and a vast embracing love for man, all these lie in that single word. The soul emerges from the unknown, begins to work in and with matter, is reborn again and again, makes karma, developes the six vehicles for itself, meets retribution for sin and punishment for mistake, grows strong by suffering, succeeds in bursting through the gloom, is enlightened by the true illumination, grasps power, retains charity, expands with love for orphaned humanity, and thenceforth helps all others who remain in darkness until all may be raised up to the place with the "Father in Heaven" who is the Higher Self. This would be the argument of the visitor from the distant planet, and he in it would describe a great ideal for all members of a Society such as ours which had its first impulse from some of these very *Mahatmas.*

Without going into any argument further than to say that evolution demands that such beings should exist or there is a gap in the

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NOTE.—This article was first published by Wm. Q. Judge in the *Path,* March, 1893, and was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for April, 1943.

chain—and this position is even held by a man of science like Prof. Huxley, who in his latest essays puts it in almost as definite language as mine—this article is meant for those who believe in the existence of the *Mahatmas,* whether that faith has arisen of itself or is the result of argument. It is meant also for all classes of the believers, for they are of several varieties. Some believe without wavering; others believe unwaveringly but are afraid to tell of their belief; a few believe, yet are always thinking that they must be able to say they have set eyes on an Adept before they can infuse their belief into others; and a certain number deliberately hide the belief as a sort of individual possession which separates them from the profane mortals who have never heard of the Adepts or who having heard scoff at the notion. To all these I wish to speak. Those unfortunate persons who are trying to measure exalted men and sages by the conventional rules of a transition civilization, or who are seemingly afraid of a vast possibility for man and therefore deny, may be well left to themselves and to time, for it is more than likely they will fall into the general belief when it is formed, as it surely will be in the course of no long time. For a belief in *Mahatmas*—whatever name you give the idea—is a common property of the whole race, and all the efforts of all the men of empirical science and dogmatic religion can never kill out the soul's own memory of its past.

We should declare our belief in the Adepts, while at the same time we demand no one's adherence. It is not necessary to give the names of any of the Adepts, for a name is an invention of a family, and but few persons ever think of themselves by name but by the phrase "I am myself." To name these beings, then, is no proof, and to seek for mystery names is to invite condemnation for profanation. The ideal without the name is large and grand enough for all purposes.

Some years ago the Adepts wrote and said to H. P. B. and to several persons that more help could be given to the movement in America because the fact of their existence was not concealed from motives of either fear or doubt. This statement of course carries with it by contradistinction the conclusion that where, from fear of schools of science or of religion, the members had not referred much to the belief in *Mahatmas,* the power to help was for some reason inhibited. This is the interesting point, and brings up the question, "Can the power to help of the *Mahatmas* be for any cause inhibited?" The answer is, It can. But why?

All effects on every plane are the result of forces set in motion, and cannot be the result of nothing, but must ever flow from causes in which they are wrapped up. If the channel through which water is meant to flow is stopped up, the water will not run there, but if a clear channel is provided the current will pass forward. Occult help from Masters requires a channel just as much as any other help does, and the fact that the currents to be used are occult makes the need for a channel greater. The persons to be acted on must take part in making the channel or line for the force to act, for if we will not have it they cannot give it. Now as we are dealing with the mind and nature of man, we have to throw out the words which will arouse the ideas connected with the forces we desire to have employed. In this case the words are those which bring up the doctrine of the existence of Adepts, Mahatmas, Masters of wisdom. Hence the value of the declaration of our belief. It arouses dormant ideas in others, it opens up a channel in the mind, it serves to make the conducting lines for the forces to use which the *Mahatmas* wish to give out. Many a young man who could never hope to see great modern professors of science like Huxley and Tyndall and Darwin has been excited to action, moved to self-help, impelled to seek for knowledge, by having heard that such men actually exist and are human beings. Without stopping to ask if the proof of their living in Europe is complete, men have sought to follow their example. Shall we not take advantage of the same law of the human mind and let the vast power of the Lodge work with our assistance and not against our opposition or doubt or fears? Those who are devoted know how they have had unseen help which showed itself in results. Those who fear may take courage, for they will find that not all their fellow beings are devoid of any underlying belief in the possibilities outlined by the doctrine of the existence of the Adepts.

And if we look over the work of the Society we find wherever the members boldly avow their belief and are not afraid to speak of this high ideal, the interest in theosophy is awake, the work goes on, the people are benefited. To the contrary, where there are constant doubt, ceaseless asking for material proof, incessant fear of what the world or science or friends will think, there the work is dead, the field is not cultivated, and the town or city receives no benefit from the efforts of those who while formally in a universal brotherhood, are not living out the great ideal.

Very wisely and as an occultist, Jesus said his followers must give

up all and follow him. We must give up the desire to save ourselves and acquire the opposite one—the wish to save others. Let us remember the story in ancient writ of Arjuna, who, entering heaven and finding that his dog was not admitted and some of his friends in hell, refused to remain and said that while one creature was out of heaven he would not enter it. This is true devotion, and this joined to an intelligent declaration of belief in the great initiation of the human race will lead to results of magnitude, will call out the forces that are behind, will prevail against hell itself and all the minions of hell now striving to retard the progress of the human soul.

EUSEBIO URBAN

THE DANGERS OF "CLAIMS"

Enq. What does the word "Mahatma" really mean?

Theo. Simply a "great soul," great through moral elevation and intellectual attainment. If the title of great is given to a drunken soldier like Alexander, why should we not call those "Great" who have achieved far greater conquests in Nature's secrets, than Alexander ever did on the field of battle? Besides, the term is an Indian and a very old word.

Enq. And why do you call them "Masters"?

Theo. We call them "Masters" because they are our teachers, and because from them we have derived all the Theosophical truths, however inadequately some of us may have expressed, and others understood, them. They are men of great learning, whom we term Initiates, and still greater holiness of life. They are not ascetics in the ordinary sense, though they certainly remain apart from the turmoil and strife of your western world. We Theosophists were, unfortunately, the first to talk of these things, to make the fact of the existence in the East of "Adepts" and "Masters" and Occult knowledge known; and now the name has become common property. It is on us, now, that the Karma, the consequences of the resulting desecration of holy names and things has fallen. All that you now find about such matters in current literature—and there is not a little of it—all is to be traced back to the impulse given in this direction by the Theosophical Society and its Founders. Our enemies profit to this day by our mistake.

—From *The Key to Theosophy*

NOTES ON THE DHAMMAPADA

THE tenth canto of the *Dhammapada,* entitled "The Rod of Punishment," again emphasizes the fundamental Buddhist view that, not only is it unethical to punish another, but that the law of Karma reveals that punishment *must* be self-inflicted. From the psychological standpoint, Buddha feels it necessary to call attention to the "chain reaction" of "angry talk" and "harsh expression." Severe violence of demeanor stirs the psychic nature of one's fellow men in like manner, and one is bound to be later affected by the hostile atmosphere generated in others, and to suffer the destructive acts which are a consequence. Thus does the "rod of retaliation" overtake the undisciplined disciple.

In verse 6 Buddha makes explicit a theme that is actually present throughout his expositions of Karma—that "when anger is not in you, you have already reached Nirvana." This point is of considerable importance in relation to the age-old doctrinal controversies between Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism. Hinayana protagonists regard the attainment of Nirvana as complete release from the obligation of earthly existence, whereas Mahayana texts insist that Buddha himself had attained Nirvana at the time of his enlightenment. On the latter view, which is strictly theosophical, Buddha combined an internal existence in Nirvana with an external striving for the assistance and redemption of all creatures. In verse 6, to "make yourself still" inwardly is said to "strike off the great sorrow of earthly existence" while still inhabiting the earth.

Verses 3 and 4 emphasize the need for the disciple to regard all other efforts to attain happiness with sympathetic understanding:

> He who seeking his own happiness uses on others the rod of punishment because they seek their own happiness, will not find happiness after death.
>
> He who seeking his own happiness uses not the rod of punishment on others though they seek their own happiness, will find happiness after death.

This is to assert the doctrine of non-violence, and Buddha is forever saying, as did Lao Tze, when he cautioned against "meddling" in the affairs of others, that it is impossible for us to *force* other human beings into righteousness. So far from being moralists in the conventional

sense, Buddha and Lao Tze regard even the personal seeking of happiness as a natural, and in this sense, legitimate stage in the acquisition of soul wisdom. The man who deliberately engages in destructive thoughts and actions, who is overly critical of his friends, neighbors, and fellow disciples becomes so involved in the details of other lives that he is bound to lose perspective on his own. Thus he builds for irritation and confusion in his own emotional nature and "will not find happiness after death," when he must pass through the sphere of Kamaloka. After all, each striving after happiness, on whatever limited basis, is nevertheless a form of striving. While harmful things may be done to others, they are done in ignorance and without the intent to injure. Thus one can be truly tolerant of any man who views life in affirmative terms, and it is characteristic of such men that they are spontaneously friendly to others, regardless of differences of opinion as to proper conduct. The moralist, on the other hand, is never satisfied with life; it is as if, diverted from the proper task of disciplining himself through increased understanding, he seeks vicarious atonement by the futile attempt to regulate the actions of others. He does not believe in Karma because he is not working upon himself according to the natural laws of psychic evolution. And the man who will not or cannot rely upon Karma will rely upon force, feeling justified in punishing or even slaying those who offend.

A fine distinction must be made, however, between punishment and reproof, for in verses 15 and 16 we encounter the following:

> Is there in this world any man modest enough, humble enough, that he minds not reproof, as a thoroughbred horse is not stung when touched by a whip?
>
> Like a thoroughbred horse, touched by a whip, let a man be ardent and active.

Here Buddha reverts to a theme first developed in Canto 6, where he tells his disciples to "follow that wise man who detects faults and blames what is blameworthy." "Value him as a revealer of hidden treasure," continues Buddha. "He will be beloved of the good." What, then, is the difference between "admonishing" or giving "reproofs," and punishment? Punishment is an ultimate judgment, and Buddha preaches against any kind of final or arbitrary condemnation. Reproof, however, administered as a goad toward self-improvement, need not be accompanied by a condemnatory attitude. One speaks to the situa-

tion at hand, and by demeanor indicates faith that improper action will naturally be corrected when the disciple sees that action in its proper light. And true enough it is that none of the great teachers of legend have been overly gentle with their disciples, least of all sentimental or "soft." Students of the *Bhagavad-Gita* will recall a beautiful passage which balances reproof with compassion; when Arjuna is overcome with self-pity, and relates his suffering in the face of great internal conflict, Krishna addresses him with forthright reproof:

> Whence, O Arjuna, cometh upon thee this dejection in matters of difficulty, so unworthy of the honorable, and leading neither to heaven nor to glory? It is disgraceful, contrary to duty, and the foundation of dishonor. Yield not thus to unmanliness, for it ill-becometh one like thee. Abandon, O tormentor of thy foes, this despicable weakness of thy heart, and stand up

But Sanjaya relates that Krishna's attitude, during the whole of this portion of the dialogue, is one of tenderness. How difficult it is to be gentle and yet completely forthright! This balance again, can only be attained by a determination to "leave all results to the Law." What must be said is said, yet need not be accompanied by inner tension or moral judgment on the part of the admonisher. Nor does the sage ever make the erring disciple feel inadequate or a failure. Not "why did you *do* that?" But, "it seems clear that you can act from a far higher basis, so why not begin?" establishes the keynote. The true teacher is never concerned with the disciple's past, but only with his future, and with that future only insofar as the disciple is able to see that, "like a thoroughbred horse," he has the capacity for a more vigorous and noble gait.

A verse from the *Sutta-Nipata* is an expression of the all-tolerant attitude inspired by Gautama. "Let none cajole or flout his fellow anywhere," begins one of the verses:

> Let none cajole or flout
> his fellow anywhere;
> let none wish others harm
> in dungeon or in hate.
>
> Just as with her own life
> a mother shields from hurt
> her own, her only, child,—
> let all-embracing thoughts
> for all that lives be thine,

> —an all-embracing love
> for all the universe
> in all its heights and depths
> and breadth, unstinted love,
> unmarred by hate within,
> not rousing enmity.

Therefore, as the last verse of the chapter on punishment relates, "good people discipline themselves," just as "carpenters carve the wood." No one learns to be a good joiner or sculptor if another constantly interrupts, snatching the material from his hands, to "improve" the work. The man who has not passed beyond the temptation to punish other beings will be always "full of doubt," for, in his highest or Buddhic nature, he is dimly aware that he has not heard nor hearkened to the Law. In his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita,* William Q. Judge speaks of the need for "reliance upon the Law" in this way:

> We must be ready to say at any moment under whatever circumstances, whether expected or unexpected: "It is just what I in fact desired." For only those ideals can be dissipated which rest upon a lower basis than the highest aim, or which are not in accord with Nature's (God's) law. And as our aim ought to be to reach the supreme condition and to help all other sentient beings to do so also, we must cultivate complete resignation to the Law, the expression and operation of which is seen in the circumstances of life and the ebb and flow of our inner being. All that can be gotten out of wealth, or beauty, or art, or pleasure, are merely pools of water found along our path as it wanders through the desert of life. If we are not seeking them their appearance gives us intense pleasure, and we are thus able to use them for our good and that of others just so long as the Law leaves them to us; but when that superior power removes them, we must say: "It is just what I in fact desired."

Here Mr. Judge points out that the disciple who ardently seeks pleasure is not apt to find it, and the reason is plain: if "intense pleasure" is our personal aim, we will be forever confronted by others who seem to have that which we desire in greater measure; but man must learn for himself that the most "intense pleasures" are those which come naturally. The disciple who does not know this must, in time however, come to know it—for himself. He cannot be forced into adopting either the scriptures or a "higher life" by threats of punishment or promises of reward.

THE MEANING OF DEATH

THERE is agony in death. We cannot hope to escape this in any immediate way, and the agony of death goes deep. Death imposes separation, deprivation, the severing of bonds of affection, and has many other psychological and emotional consequences. But if we reflect that even what we think of as unpleasant experiences are in some measure assuaged by comprehending how they come to happen, and if they can be given a place in the scheme of things, we know that the pain is reduced by at least that much. It is reduced still more if we have taught ourselves to live the kind of life which hearkens to meaning. The doctor, understanding the role of pain, is probably more able to endure it in himself and in others than those of us who have not given much thought to this subject. But pain, for most of us, is simply an evil to be avoided.

Our general attitude, the attitude of our time and civilization, is that the pursuit of happiness is the prime goal, and that happiness must be thought of as a species of pleasure—perhaps elevated and well-bred, but nonetheless merely pleasure. This view may be responsible for a lot more of the pain that we dislike than should normally be ours, and a *part* of that pain may arise from the absence in our lives of a sense of the genuine meaning of death.

There are two sources of a sense of meaning concerning death. One is a *teaching* about what it means. If these teachings are acceptable to the mind, we may take them to heart—which makes death easier to bear. The other source of meaning is our own experience, which permits us to say to ourselves, "Well, something is happening here which is of use, has meaning, and I must keep my balance." Many of the experiences of life are ameliorated by this kind of perception, which may be out in the open where we can consider it with some degree of awareness, or may be inarticulate but nevertheless real. A teaching, a doctrine, can only *relate* to this attitude. This is all we can ask of a doctrine. The impact of three-dimensional experience, though, is different from the symmetry of a doctrinal explanation. It disturbs the surety of a doctrinal explanation, and sometimes sends it tottering, as we sense that another kind of knowledge is needed.

Intuitive insight often seems to have very little resemblance to what we call teachings. It is present in the works of the great poets, for

instance, for whom the occasion of death is a thing of austerity and magnificence. There is somehow an intuitive communication by the poet; this man knows something, we feel, yet if called upon to say *what* he knows, we find ourselves inarticulate. The serenity of the poet as he looks upon death may inspire philosophic feeling in ourselves. It is something we would all like to have. It is different from, yet related to, the explanation we find in the teachings. This is what we are after. The one can be provided in books; the other we have to provide for ourselves, and unless they are together our knowledge remains either artificial or incomplete and tentative—perhaps even a source of confusion in a view of life which insists that everything can be easily explained. The philosopher, as such, remains in some department of his being an interested and learning observer. So this, then, is the general problem concerning the meaning of death.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* manifestly speaks from a background of teaching and understanding which is very different from, if not alien to, ours. Here is an outspoken assertion about the nature of things in which the teacher Krishna gives voice, so to say, to the ultimate principle of things. When he says "I," he means the root of reality in the hearts of all men. And it is fairly evident that for him the meaning of death is a subordinate subject, if, indeed, it is in any sense divided from the meaning of life. Death, for him, is in no sense a finality.

The grand confidence with which this is set forth in the *Bhagavad-Gita* contrasts with the complete absence of confidence in our civilization—which is at least an instruction in history if nothing else. Our age is what may be called pluralistic, although this was not always so. At one time there was a single, simple, unified explanation which proposed that there is One Reality. This belief we call monism. Then there are those who propose that there is a duality in life—matter and spirit, heaven and earth. Finally there are those who maintain that there are many points of causation for what happens—Pluralism. Modern science is pluralistic; we as a culture, are pluralistic. We seem to think that one cannot think about death and about birth in one frame of reference. We seem to think that there is no connection between life and death. Death is a *termination* that we can think about; and birth, an *origination.* But their meaning may be utterly inseparable.

That is the affirmation we encounter in the *Bhagavad-Gita.* And that is why it is so overwhelming—it is a grand scheme of meaning. In Theosophy, then, we are invited to a general conception of the nature

of things, and not to a fragmentary analysis. Surely, if we could pass from life to death without a cessation of consciousness, we would have an entirely different view from the prevailing one.

Death is a phase in the process of evolution. From the point of view of the soul's experience, it is a necessary part of that process. Death comes when the body is no longer useful to us, or when we have lost claim to it by means we do not even quite understand. At any rate, it marks the end of a cycle of learning. There is a withdrawal of the vital energies from the body; the sense of identity goes. Then, according to the teachings of Theosophy, another process supervenes—the extraction of the higher human intelligence from its lower human habits which have a connection with bodily existence. Certainly it makes no strain on our credulity to acknowledge that there are many things in life that we would hate to carry with us forever. And this is because there is something in us that *understands eternity,* even though we can't define it, something which comprehends what is worthy and good; and there are hours in which we want this vision in our lives. But when we are talking about the higher self, we find its influence so inextricably mixed in human nature that to isolate the noble and the good tends to produce colorless and moralistic opinions.

After death, it is said, the higher intelligence proceeds in a kind of winnowing process. It gathers unto itself unassimilated experiences, so that there is now another completion in another vesture. If we wish to understand the nature of this vesture, we might say it is a vesture of thought. This is the *substance* of thinking and feeling. However, since a life is of finite duration, and since the experiences of a life, however complex and rich their implications, are capable of being exhausted, so this process of assimilation by the ego of the fruit of that life comes eventually to a close. Yet there is, according to Theosophy, a web of attractive forces which unite the soul—wherever it may be—with the earth. It will continue to revolve around this orbit until it "knows," until it finds its own center of gravity. For the soul, the center of gravity is knowledge; equilibrium, its circumstance. The ideal image of the soul, in ancient thought, was a sphere, because the sphere is something which is never out of balance.

To be born into this world is to die out of another. The process continues until we are so familiar with the byways of earthly existence that it is no longer a one-way street. Then we will no longer pass from condition to condition by the pulls of our attractions; then, we will move

freely through the channels of experience, knowing what the laws are. This is to be a *complete* human being. And if there is any way in which knowledge can be attained in our present condition, then surely it is from beings who are more nearly "complete" than we. The problem is to assure ourselves that this sort of experience has been recorded, verified, and accurately reported. Characteristically, in our age, we are extremely aware of the competition of claims. We can no longer say, in this society, that spiritual affairs are accommodated by church or temple, although perhaps they were at one time. In the Golden Age, the prevailing institutions were set apart from the din and hurry of the market place in order to invite the mind to concern itself with the soul. But we do not live in such a period. *We* are obliged to decide for ourselves where the truth lies. If there is nobody to ask, we have ultimately to ask ourselves. This may be because ours is a bad society; but it may also be because, at a certain point in the life of man, human beings *must* begin to be really individual.

"Unless Immortality be True"

The denial of a future life introduces discord, grief, and despair in every direction, and, by making each step of advanced culture the ascent to a wider survey of tantalizing glory and experienced sorrow, as well as the preparation for a greater fall and a sadder loss, turns faithful affection and heroic thought into "blind furies slinging flame." Unless immortality be true, man appears a dark riddle, not made for that of which he is made capable and desirous: every thing is begun, nothing ended; the facts of the present scene are unintelligible; the plainest analogies are violated; the delicately-rising scale of existence is broken off abrupt.

—William R. Alger

PERENNIAL WITNESSES

If any one thing is universally acknowledged, it is that the real secrets of not a single surviving ancient brotherhood are in possession of the profane. —H. P. BLAVATSKY

SAYS a Persian proverb: "The darker the sky is, the brighter the stars will shine." Among the great mass of peoples plunged in the superstitious ignorance of the medieval ages, there were but a few students of the Hermetic philosophy of old, who, profiting by what it had taught them, were enabled to forecast discoveries which are the boast of our present age; while at the same time the ancestors of the later high priests of the temple of the Holy Molecule were yet discovering the hoof-tracks of Satan in the simplest natural phenomena. Thus, on the dark firmament of the medieval ages began appearing the mysterious Brothers of the Rosie Cross. They formed no associations, they built no colleges, for, hunted up and down like so many wild beasts, when caught by the Christian Church, they were unceremoniously roasted.

The Rosicrucians are best known under the apt designation of the Fire Philosophers. They, and the earlier Zoroastrians, affirmed that the world was created of *Fire,* the *divine spirit* of which was an omnipotent and omniscient GOD. Science has condescended to corroborate their claims as to the physical question. Fire, in the ancient philosophy of all times and countries, including our own, has been regarded as a triple principle. As water comprises a visible fluid with invisible gases lurking within, and behind all the spiritual principle of nature, which gives them their dynamic energy—so, in fire they recognized: (1) visible flame; (2) invisible, or astral fire—invisible when inert, but when active producing light, heat, chemical force, and electricity, the molecular powers; (3) spirit. They applied the same rule to each of the elements; and everything evolved from their combinations and correlations, man included, was held by them to be triune. Fire, in the opinion of the Rosicrucians, who were but the successors of the theurgists, was the source, not only of the material atoms, but also of the forces which energized them. When a visible flame is extinguished it has disappeared, not only from the sight but also from the conception of the materialist, forever. But the Hermetic philosopher follows it

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NOTE.—Collated from Theosophical works.

through the "partition-world of the knowable, and out on the other side into the unknowable," as he traces the disembodied human spirit, "vital spark of heavenly flame," into the Æthereum, beyond the grave.

The Rosicrucians of the middle ages, such as Robert Fludd, Paracelsus, Thomas Vaughn, Van Helmont, and others, were all alchemists, who sought for the *hidden spirit* in every organic matter. Alchemy is, as the name suggests, the chemistry of nature; dealing with the *finer* forces of nature and the various conditions in which they are found to operate. Some people—nay, the great majority—have accused alchemists of charlatanry and false pretending. Surely such men as Roger Bacon, Agrippa, Henry Kunrath, and the Arabian Geber—the latter being the first to introduce into Europe some of the secrets of chemistry—can hardly be treated as impostors, least of all, fools. Though alchemy first penetrated into Europe through the Arabian sage and philosopher in the eighth century, it was known and practiced long ages ago in China and Egypt, numerous papyri on alchemy and other proofs of its being the favorite study of kings and priests having been exhumed and preserved under the generic name of treatises of Hermes.

Alchemy is studied under three distinct aspects, which admit of many different interpretations: viz., the Cosmic, Human, and Terrestrial. These three methods were typified under the three alchemical properties—sulphur, mercury, and salt. Different writers have stated that there are three, seven, ten, and twelve processes respectively. But all writers agreed that there is but one *object* in alchemy, which is to transmute gross metals into pure gold. What that gold, however, really is, very few people understand correctly. No doubt that there is such a thing in nature as transmutation of the baser metals into the nobler, or gold. But this is only one aspect of alchemy, the *terrestrial* and purely material, for we sense logically the same process taking place in the bowels of the earth. Yet, beyond and besides this interpretation, there is in alchemy a symbolical meaning, purely psychic and spiritual. While the Kabalist-Alchemist seeks the realization of the former, the Occultist-Alchemist, spurning the gold of the mines, gives all his attention and directs his efforts only toward the transmutation of the baser *quaternary* into the divine upper *trinity* of man, which when finally blended are one. The spiritual, mental, and psychic and physical planes of human existence are in alchemy compared to the four elements fire, air, water and earth, and are each capable of a threefold constitution, i.e., fixed, mutable, and volatile.

Seeking under the veil of language, more or less artificial, to convey to the uninitiated so much of the *mysterium magnum* as is safe in the hands of a selfish world, the alchemist postulates as his first principle the existence of a certain Universal Solvent by which all composite bodies are resolved into the homogeneous substance from which they are evolved, which substance he calls pure gold, or *summa materia.* This solvent, also called *menstruum universale,* possesses the power of removing all the seeds of disease from the human body, of renewing youth and prolonging life. Such is the *lapis philosophorum* (philosopher's "stone").

There are revelations of the spiritual senses of man which may be trusted far more than all the sophistries of materialism. What was a demonstration and a success in the eyes of Plato and other sages during the past is now considered by materialism the overflow of a spurious philosophy and a failure. The scientific methods are reversed. The testimony of men of old, who were nearer the truth, for they were nearer to the *hidden spirit* of nature—the only aspect under which the Deity will allow itself to be viewed and understood—and their demonstrations, are rejected. Their speculations, if we must believe the modern thinkers, are but the expressions of a redundance of the unsystematic opinions of men unacquainted with the scientific methods of the present nineteenth century. They foolishly based the little they knew of physiology on well-demonstrated psychology, while the scholar of our day bases psychology—of which he confesses himself utterly ignorant—on physiology, which to him is as yet a closed book, and, as Fournie tells us, has not even a method of his own. Says Hippocrates centuries ago: "All knowledge, all arts are to be found in nature. If we question her *properly* she will reveal to us the truths that pertain to each of these and to ourselves. What is nature in operation but the very Divinity itself manifesting its presence? How are we to interrogate her; and how is she to answer us? We must proceed on *faith,* with the firm assurance of discovering at last the whole of the truth; and nature will let us know her answer, through our *inner* sense, which with the help of our knowledge of a certain *art of science,* reveals to us the truth so clearly that further doubt becomes impossible."

Before any of our modern teachers thought of evolution, the ancients taught us, through Hermes, that nothing can be abrupt in nature; that she never proceeds by jumps and starts, that everything in her works is slow harmony, and that there is nothing sudden—not even violent

death. The slow development from pre-existing forms was a doctrine with the Rosicrucian Illuminati. The *Tres Matres* ("Three Mothers") showed Hermes that mysterious progress of their work, before they condescended to reveal themselves to the medieval alchemists. Now, in the Hermetic dialect, these three mothers are the symbol of light, heat, and electricity, or magnetism, the two latter being as convertible as the whole of the forces or agents which have a place assigned them in the modern "Force-correlation." Many of these mystics, by following what they were taught by some treatises, secretly preserved from one generation to another, achieved discoveries which would not be despised even by today's exact sciences. A force whose secret powers were thoroughly familiar to the ancient theurgists, is denied by modern sceptics. The antediluvian children—who perhaps played with it, using it as the boys in Bulwer-Lytton's *Coming Race* use the tremendous *"vril"*—called it the "Water of Phtha"; their descendants named it the *Anima Mundi,* the soul of the universe; and still later the medieval hermetist terms it "sidereal light," or the "Milk of the Celestial Virgin," the "Magnes," and many other names. But our modern learned men will neither accept nor recognize it under such appellations; for it pertains to magic, and magic is, in their conception, a disgraceful superstition.

It might be shown that if an Eastern Brotherhood can lift the mask of European societies—the Company of Jesus included—its members are nevertheless successful in wearing their own visors: for, if any one thing is universally acknowledged, it is that the real secrets of not a single surviving ancient brotherhood are in possession of the profane. No one could ever lay hands on the Rosicrucians, and notwithstanding the alleged discoveries of the "secret chambers," *vellums* called "T", and of fossil knights with ever-burning lamps, this ancient association and its true aims are to this day a mystery. Pretended Templars and sham Rose-Croix, with a few genuine kabalists, were occasionally burned, and some unlucky Theosophists and alchemists sought and put to the torture; delusive confessions even were wrung from them by the most ferocious means, but yet, the true Society remains today as it has ever been, unknown to all, especially to its cruelest enemy—the Church. The Temple (Masonic) was the last European secret organization, which, as a body, had in its possession some of the mysteries of the East. True, there were in the past century (and perhaps still are) isolated "Brothers" faithfully and secretly working under the direction

of certain Eastern Brotherhoods. But these, when they did belong to European societies, invariably joined them for objects unknown to the Fraternity, though at the same time for the benefit of the latter. It is through them that modern Masons have all they know of importance; and the similarity now found between the Speculative Rites of antiquity, the Mysteries of the Essenes, Gnostics, and the Hindus, and the highest and oldest of the Masonic degrees well prove the fact.

If these mysterious brothers became possessed of the secrets of the societies, they could never reciprocate the confidence, though in their hands these secrets were safer, perhaps, than in the keeping of European Masons. When certain of the latter were found worthy of becoming affiliates of the Orient, they were secretly instructed and initiated, but the others were none the wiser for that. As to the modern Knights Templar and those Masonic Lodges which now claim descent from the ancient Templars, their persecution by the Church was a farce from the beginning. They have not, nor have they ever had any secrets dangerous to the Church. Quite the contrary; for we find F. G. Findel saying that the Scottish degrees, or the Templar system, only dates from 1735-1740, and "following its Catholic tendency, took up its chief residence in the Jesuit College of Clermont, in Paris, and hence was called the Clermont system."

The science of the "Master Masons" of the West is in the *East* called in some places "the seven-storied," in others "the nine-storied" Temple; every story answering allegorically to a degree of the knowledge acquired. Throughout the countries of the Orient, wherever magic and the wisdom-religion are studied, its practitioners and students are known among their craft as Builders—for they build the temple of knowledge, of secret science. Those of the adepts who are active, are styled practical or *operative* Builders, while the students, or neophytes, are classed as *speculative* or theoretical. The former exemplify in their works control over the forces of inanimate as well as animate nature; the latter are but perfecting themselves in the rudiments of the sacred science. These terms were evidently borrowed at the beginning by the unknown founders of the first Masonic guilds. In Egypt, in former times, the initiated hierophant was given a square head-dress, which he had to wear always, and a *square,* without which he could never go abroad. . . . The square hats are worn unto this day by the Armenian priests. Jesus, an initiate, was certainly a Master-builder or Master-Mason as it is now called; else how explain that on the most ancient

cathedrals we find his figure with Mason's marks about his person? In the Cathedral of Santa Croce, Florence, over the main portal can be seen the figure of Christ holding a perfect square in his hand!

The Kabalist too is a student of secret science, one who follows *unwritten* or oral tradition and interprets the hidden meaning of the Scriptures with the help of the symbolical Kabala, and explains the real one by this means. Among the Jews the real kabalists were the Tanaim, initiates. They appeared at Jerusalem about the beginning of the third century before the Christian era. The books of Ezekiel, Daniel, Henoch, and the Revelation of St. John are purely kabalistical. This secret doctrine is identical with that of the Chaldeans, and includes at the same time much of the Persian wisdom, or "magic." History catches glimpses of famous kabalists ever since the eleventh century. The medieval ages, and even our own times have had an enormous number of the most learned and intellectual men who were students of the Kabala. The most famous among the former were Paracelsus, Henry Kunrath, Jacob Boehme, Robert Fludd, the two Van Helmonts, the Abbot John Trithemius, Cornelius Agrippa, Cardinal Nicolao Cusano, Jerome Carden, Pope Sixtus IV, and such Christian scholars as Raymond Lully, Giovanni Pico de la Mirandola, Guillaume Postel, the great John Reuchlin, Dr. Henry More, Eugenius Philalethes, the erudite Jesuit Athanasius Kircher, Christian Knorr (Baron) von Rosenroth; then Sir Isaac Newton, Leibniz, Lord Bacon, Spinoza, etc., etc., the list being almost inexhaustible. As remarked by Mr. Isaac Meyer, in his *Quballah,* the ideas of the kabalists have largely influenced European literature. Kabalism ran through the medieval poem, the "Romance of the Rose," and permeates the writings of Dante. The system is certainly very old, but like all the rest of systems whether religious or philosophical the Kabala is derived directly from the primeval Secret Doctrine of the East; through the Vedas, the Upanishads, Orpheus and Thales, Pythagoras and the Egyptians.

As a modern historian remarks, the works of those societies which in the West during the middle ages perpetuated the ancient wisdom-religion, "may be taken as a sort of exemplification of the class of exhibitions which were probably the result of a *superior knowledge* of natural sciences." No one ever doubted that it was the result of precisely such a knowledge; and the hermetists, magicians, astrologers, and alchemists never claimed anything else. It certainly was not their fault that the ignorant masses, under the influence of an unscrupulous

and fanatical clergy, should have attributed all such works to the agency of the devil. In view of the atrocious tortures provided by the Inquisition for all suspected of either black or white magic, it is not strange that these philosophers neither boasted nor even acknowledged the fact of such an intercourse. On the contrary, their own writings prove that they held that magic is "no more than the application of natural active causes to passive things or subjects; by means whereof, many tremendously surprising yet natural effects are produced."

Little or nothing is known by the world concerning the origin of this archaic branch of philosophy called Alchemy or the Hermetic science; but it is certain that it antedates the construction of any known Zodiac, and, as dealing with the personified forces of nature, probably also any of the mythologies of the world. Nor is there any doubt that the true secret of transmutation (on the physical plane) was known in days of old, and lost before the dawn of the so-called historical period. Modern chemistry owes its best fundamental discoveries to alchemy, but regardless of the undeniable truism of the latter that there is but *one* element in the universe, chemistry has placed metals in the class of elements and is only now beginning to find out its gross mistake. The Hermetists and the later Rosicrucians held that all things visible and invisible were produced by the contention of light with darkness, and that every particle of matter contains within itself a spark of the divine essence—of light, *spirit*—which, through its tendency to free itself from its entanglement and return to the central source, produced motion in the particles, and from motion forms were born. Says Hargrave Jennings, quoting Robert Fludd: "Thus all minerals in this spark of life have the rudimentary possibility of plants and growing organisms; thus all plants have rudimentary sensations which might (in the ages) enable them to perfect and *transmute* into locomotive new creatures; lesser or higher in their grade, or nobler or meaner in their functions. Thus all plants and all vegetation might pass off (by side roads) into more distinguished highways as it were, of independent, completer advance, allowing their original spark of light to expand and thrill with higher and more vivid forces, and to urge forward with more abounding, informed purpose, all wrought by planetary influences *directed by the unseen spirits* (or workers) of the great original architect."

The Rosicrucians, the Kabalists, the Alchemists have never claimed, with regard to their "Philosopher's Stone" that either an endless physi-

cal life or unending motion is possible. Continual and perpetual does not mean endless. The Hermetic axiom maintains that only the First Cause and its direct emanations, our spirits (scintillas from the eternal central sun which will be reabsorbed by it at the end of time) are incorruptible and eternal. But, in possession of a knowledge of occult natural forces, yet undiscovered by the materialists, they asserted that both physical life and mechanical motion could be prolonged indefinitely. The philosopher's stone had more than one meaning attached to its mysterious origin. Our greatest wonder is, that the very men who view the human body simply as a "digesting machine," should object to the idea that if some equivalent for metalline could be applied between its molecules, it should run without friction. Man's body is taken from the earth, or dust, according to *Genesis;* which allegory bars the claim of modern analysts to original discovery of the nature of the inorganic constituents of the human body. If the author of *Genesis* knew this, and Aristotle taught the identity between the life-principle of plants, animals, and men, our affiliation with mother earth seems to have been settled long ago.

Elie de Beaumont asserted the old doctrine of Hermes that there is a terrestrial circulation comparable to that of the blood of man. Now, since it is a doctrine as old as time, that nature is continually renewing her wasted energies by absorption from the source of energy, why should the child differ from the parent? Why may not man, by discovering the *source* and nature of this recuperative energy, extract from the earth herself the juice or quintessence with which to replenish his own forces? *This may have been the great secret of the alchemists.* Stop the circulation of the terrestrial fluids and we have stagnation, putrefaction, death. Stop the circulation of the fluids in man, and stagnation, absorption, calcification from old age, and death ensue. If the alchemists had simply discovered some chemical compound capable of keeping the channels of our circulation unclogged, would not all the rest easily follow?

And why, we ask, if the surface waters of certain mineral springs have such virtue in the cure of disease and the restoration of physical vigor, is it illogical to say that if we could get the *first runnings* from the alembic of nature in the bowels of the earth, we might, perhaps, find that the fountain of youth was no myth after all. Jennings asserts that the elixir was produced out of the secret chemical laboratories of nature by some adepts; and Robert Boyle, the chemist, mentions a medi-

cated wine or cordial which Dr. Lefebre tried with wonderful effect upon an old woman. *Alchemy is as old as tradition itself.* Fabulous history has recorded Solomon, Pythagoras, and Hermes as among its most distinguished votaries. "The secret of transmutation," say the alchemists, "is an *amalgamation* of the salt, sulphur, and mercury combined three times in Azoth, by a triple sublimation and a triple fixation"! However absurd in the eyes of the modern chemist, the disciples of the great Hermes understand the above as well as a graduate of Harvard University comprehends the meaning of his Professor of Chemistry when the latter says. "With one hydroxyl group we can only produce monatomic compounds; use two hydroxyl groups, and we can form around the same skeleton a number of diatomic compounds. Attach to the nucleus three hydroxyl groups, and there results triatomic compounds, among which is a very familiar substance—*Glycerine.*"

"Attach thyself," says the alchemist, "to the four letters of the tetragram disposed in the following manner: The letters of the ineffable name are there, although thou mayest not discern them at first. The incommunicable axiom is kabalistically contained therein, and this is what is called the magic arcanum by the masters." The arcanum—the fourth emanation of the Akasha, (is) the principle of LIFE, which is represented in its third transmutation by the fiery sun, the eye of the world, or of Osiris, as the Egyptians termed it. An eye tenderly watching its youngest daughter, wife, and sister—Isis, our mother earth. It is for the Hermetic student to watch its motions, to catch its subtile currents, to guide and direct them with the help of the *athanor,* the Archimedean lever of the alchemist . . . "which the physicist sees and examines daily."

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

IN answer to a question in this section (January, p.126) the statement occurs: "Theosophy is the essence, or, as H.P.B. states in The Key to Theosophy, *the combined views of all religions." This last should not be attributed to H.P.B., who didn't say quite that; also it is incorrect, because Theosophy would then be defined as simply a kind of receptacle for every sort of truth and fallacy—since "religions" include many false doctrines. How about some more discussion on this?*

It looks as if the statement "Theosophy is the combined views of all religions" is meant to signify that the Theosophist undertakes to *study,* together, the views of all religions—seeing all truth and untruth discovered with the eye of understanding. This way, what is studied, whether true or false, is not Theosophy itself, but the three objects of the Theosophical Society which stressed that "combined," impartial study should be the keynote of the work undertaken.

It is correct that this statement should not be attributed to H.P.B. It probably is best at this point to copy a few sentences pertaining to this from *The Key to Theosophy* (pp. 58-59):

> It [Theosophy] is the essence of all religion and of absolute truth, a drop of which only underlies every creed. To resort once more to metaphor. Theosophy, on earth, is like the white ray of the spectrum, and every religion only one of the seven prismatic colours. Ignoring all the others, and cursing them as false, every special coloured ray claims not only priority, but to be *that white ray* itself and anathematizes even its own tints from light to dark, as heresies.
>
> For it is only by studying the various great religions and philosophies of humanity, by comparing them dispassionately and with an unbiassed mind, that men can hope to arrive at the truth. It is especially by finding out and noting their various points of agreement that we may achieve this result.

We find with friends that a growing relationship is built on that which we see as a bit of "the truth" in the other person or his attitude. We combine this portion of truth with portions gleaned from other relationships. Thus we can say that the combined portions and bits of truth that are sifted out of various relationships—and ideas—are Theosophy. We must remember that even in the writings of Theosophy as given to us by H.P.B., W.Q.J., and R.C., there is a lot of

ground covered—some religious, some philosophical, and some metaphysical, none by itself representing Theosophy completely. So with combined views of religions; the best and purest parts of all religions combined can be considered a part of Theosophy, since Theosophy, from all that we can read about it, represents a vast area with many emphases and levels of truth.

As one reads and studies the writings of Theosophy as set forth by H.P.B., W.Q.J., and R.C., one thing begins to stand out in the mind—that there are no formulas or set of "right answers" for the problems of living, just as there are no perfect doctrinal forms. There are attitudes of mind, constructive and destructive, but no formulas for figuring out the actual course to be followed by each person.

Man travels through stages of awakening which enable him to respond to certain presentations of Theosophy according to his needs and capabilities at the time. Thus, the sort of Theosophy to be found in one age, or stage of a man's existence, may be "only" essentially the same truth; truth does not change, *but will be presented according to how it may be best received and assimilated.* A child cannot understand the teachings offered to a college student, but the same principles or ideas may be presented to him, given in forms that do not completely reach beyond the younger person's ability to comprehend. The "real" value of anything is seen to be conditional. Learning from this, the philosopher finds that he always has many alternatives of action at his disposal, and knows it is not a question of which is "right" so much as a question of *why* he chooses as he does. This is far better than trying to fit into a pattern, for it takes into full consideration the integrity of the individual.

Perhaps all this adds up to one reason why H.P.B. shows us that Theosophy can be presented in many forms and lights—not dependent upon any *one* formulation, but a way of understanding life through attitude of mind and integrity. For if one studies Theosophy as set forth by one teacher alone, and thinks, "Ah, at last here it *all* is just as I read it," he misses part of the meaning of Theosophy.

Freedom for the individual is considered very important, yet does one really have freedom until one has learned the meaning of discipline and control? Does one encourage unrestricted freedom first and then work for discipline?

It appears, from the philosophy of Theosophy, that the essential discipline and freedom are both to come from the individual, be

felt by him as needs and a result of his developing his nature as an integral whole. It is an obvious fact, observed by everyone at some time or another, that externally imposed discipline can only carry a person along for a certain length of time, with just a certain amount of beneficial results; and similarly, unrestricted freedom, for one who has not yet learned that responsibility must accompany it, could develop him into a person who just follows his inclinations—and thus never learns what is deep-rooted and never seeks for the hidden meaning of life.

There are a number of rules and "already-decided" disciplines that we are faced with, and it is commonly assumed, if one orders his nature along these lines, that he is leading a disciplined life. He is, too, in a way; but perhaps one way that one could get both discipline and freedom would be for him to make his own laws, applying just to himself. Suppose he has come across a book that he knows is beneficial and something from which he could learn a great deal. If he proposed that he read in it, say ten minutes a day, and did this regularly, he would have *chosen* the discipline that he was following, one that he knew would do him a great deal of good, and was at the same time establishing this pattern of "living the higher life"—striving after that which is other than physical attainment or the gratification of the senses.

When children are very young they sometimes play games of setting up "laws" that they themselves are not supposed to break. And then, often, in the teen-age group, you will find those who put tremendous effort into some line of effort, perhaps some physical endeavor, such as boys' athletics, or it may be some scholastic goal—or perhaps even some moral ideal one wants to try to follow. This age group has a lot of energy to throw into such attempts and if this inclination could be made into something more than an experiment that will run its course and cease, if it could become an integral part of a person, so that he will constantly seek little disciplines or rules for himself to follow, with a concept of "freedom" coming *afterward,* further progress along this line is encouraged by the momentum gained. At the same time one can enjoy much more acutely his freedoms and relaxations.

This is, of course, freedom in a limited and particular sense. The freedom of the *mind* is meant to imply an outlook that is not encased in dogmas or narrowed to a certain, limited train of thinking. But if one is continually trying to make his life have a good share of disciplined action in it, he will be inclined, naturally, to fight his prejudices vigorously.

THEORIES OF THE ALCHEMISTS

IN essence, the principles under which the researches of the Alchemists were conducted were few in number and simple. Their labor consisted in trying to find out the quintessence of life, as found in any form, and such labors occupied their lifetime. Few, evidently, fully realized the search. Some great names have come down to us, as Lully, Geber, Cagliostro, Roger Bacon, Paracelsus—often with some record of the fruits of their successes. These names, however, belong to the first efforts of the oncoming Western nations; and evidently, too, there are today no such names to be blazoned forth as products of Western "magic." But in the East there is little doubt that the case is different, and that the alchemical science and philosophy which was there born many millennia past still has its successful devotees of all degrees.

A revealing statement in this connection is made by H. P. Blavatsky, who says: "While the men of Western learning had, and still have, the four (Elements) of matter to toy with, the Eastern Occultists and their disciples, the great alchemists the world over, have the whole septenary to study from." The literature of Theosophy shows in many places, however, the tie that existed between the successful philosophers in magic of the West, and the occult East. The persecution of such Westerns in every single case for their adherence to the principles of the Wisdom-Religion, is, however, also to be remarked.

It is difficult to judge in what degree the term alchemy is still anathema to our chemists. Generally, the name is synonymous with charlatanism, and this of itself suffices to prevent investigation into the well concealed chemical operations of these ancients. Like natures can only commune with like natures. Spirit is perceptible only to spiritual sight. In whatever layer of life one fixes his gaze, to that it shall remain fixed. Alchemy is not chemistry, though it includes it.

The alchemist strove to realize his own position with regard to Nature as a whole; and the enunciation of the "sidereal influences upon man" provided working principles. But he did not place these forms of life-force outside man, nor did he separate man from any of them, macrocosmically considered: "The identical composition of the earth and all other planetary bodies and man's terrestrial body was a fundamental idea in his philosophy." Between man and celestial bodies was an "identity of essence." Both were considered as "magnets," the two

great laws of attraction and repulsion being at the core of alchemical philosophy. Agrippa taught: "Influences only go forth through the help of spirit; but this spirit is diffused through the whole universe and is in full accord with the human spirits. The magician who would acquire supernatural powers must possess, *faith, love,* and *hope* . . . In all things there is a secret power concealed, and thence come the miraculous powers of magic."

Perhaps all the alchemists down the ages studiously labored to find a remedy for the prolongation of life, that is, a substance possessing the power to *retard decay* of the organism. It is however not to be understood from this plausibility that their object was ever to discover the so-called fountain of youth—a materializing dream. They taught, as does Theosophy, that the vehicle of physical life in the human kingdom, as in all others, falls within the laws governing those compounds called bodies, and that when a man's time has come to leave, he must go. It is not of record, however, that any of them taught man's stay on earth as having precise limits; certainly the stories concerning longevity, especially throughout Asiatic countries, exist to this day. What the alchemists did teach, and furthermore demonstrated was that many die before their time, neither by physical disease nor "by a visitation of Providence, but because they are in ignorance of the *laws controlling their own nature.*"

To summarize: in the sight of the alchemist, the concept of Nature was a spiritual one. His object was to discover the way to the immortal part of every existing "substance," which he called the "fifth" essence. All his efforts were devoted to the refining of the *lower* into the essential light and nature of its higher oversoul. These were efforts to acquire the true "Midas touch," but oppositely directed. During the dark medieval times of the West there were only "underground" attempts, singly and in confraternity, to keep alive the principles of true Brotherhood, or in other terms, the truth of spiritual identity. Hence such men were hunted down, slaughtered, tortured and burned when caught by agents of an entirely different sort of "fraternity," whose ends were also entirely different from those of true Alchemy.

Life itself, said the alchemist, comes from heaven. It is eternal, unchangeable, as is Truth. But as it requires substantial forms for its manifestations, and as these are subject to disequilibrium, the remedies, alchemists taught, were also provided "by Nature for such purposes."

SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS

The Doctrine of Perfectibility

[The short articles comprising this series are derivations from characteristic platform talks given during the years 1915-35. As often as was practicable, the words of the speaker have been used—hoping thus to convey some of the force originally imparted to the ideas. It is hoped, further, that the original expressions may awaken perspectives which have long lain dormant in other student-minds, as in the mind of the present compilers.—Editors.]

THIS doctrine of the perfectibility of man is easily comprehended by some men, but is extremely difficult for others—due to centuries of dissemination of the degrading and infamous doctrine that man is originally sinful, basically defective, inherently imperfect. If it may be said of man, the microcosm of the Universe, it may also be said of the Universe, the macrocosm: This universe is originally sinful, is inherently imperfect, was damned from the beginning—all the rest is merely carrying that sentence into execution. Yet no one would think of maligning the *universe* in this manner, even materialistic scientists have more respect than that for the mysteries of Nature.

The whole story of original sin is a monstrous, priestly invocation of the power of evil, making deliberate appeal to man's fear. This is a dreadful crime. For man, through ignorance, listens to the priestly voice; listening, he becomes a slave when he should be free. Better to be the worst sinner who ever lived upon this earth, than to be a man who, in the name of the Most High, demands the moral obedience, the intellectual servility, the spiritual blindness of millions through their love. For the man who is a forthright sinner damns only himself, whereas the man who preaches original sin ("sin" merely by being born!) damns *at its source* the current of divinity that should flow through a human life.

Why is a man willing to assume this burden of guilt handed to him by priests? Partly, no doubt, because he is ever-conscious of his many failures to live up to his better impulses and higher aspirations; but in greater measure, it is due to emphasis on outward action, especially on *forms* of worship, rather than on inner motive. Thus, one man may feel "guilty" because he is not perfect, though another may throw off

all responsibility for himself because he is "just a poor, miserable sinner—so what can you expect?" Both are wrong.

Theosophy says that each man must live his *own* life, not another's: must do his *own* work, attend to his *own* duties, accept his *own* responsibilities. Howsoever more enriching or rewarding the life may seem to a man, he is *not free* to try to live that life until he has fulfilled himself in his own place. Take an example from mechanics: a cam, with its axis off center, gives eccentric motion, or a back-and-forth movement; whereas a wheel has uniform rotation in one direction. The cam is constructed for a specific purpose, has a definite function which is just as important in its place as the work of a wheel is in *its*. Each belongs *just* where it is. So with a man! each man belongs where he is, and nowhere else.

Yet a man is, so to say, an intelligent cam. He can see that he is a cam because his axis is off-center—that is, his principles are not in line, his motivations are not "true" to the center of his being, the Higher Ego. Must he, then, always remain a cam, seesawing back-and-forth, never going directly toward his goal? Theosophy says, No: a man may, by studying the principles expounded in Theosophy, by observing the "principle" from which he acts, by cleansing his mind of personal bias, and purifying his motives of selfish intent, gradually shift his "axis" toward the true center. Slowly the "cam" approximates the wheel, whose uniform rotation and motionless hub symbolize perfection in action.

The doctrine of the perfectibility of man synthesizes the fundamental concepts of Theosophy: that there is one source of life and consciousness pervading the universe; that life and consciousness move according to a law inherent in them; that self-conscious beings progress by effort directed in accordance with these laws. Great Nature has herself impelled us far along the road of evolution. We can see that however inferior we may be to the highest being, we can already *conceive,* even if we cannot BE; we can already imagine, even though we cannot yet embody. However short we may fall from the high ideal of the Soul, the Spiritual Being, the Perceiver, yet we can see that we stand far, far higher in the school of life than our brothers in the lesser halls of learning. In the great school of life the lowest of men is immeasurably higher than the highest animal. The lowest animal is immeasurably higher in the scale than the highest of the vegetable kingdom. And what a godsome monarch is a green-leafed plant on a

stony hillside creeping forth from a crevice in the rock, compared with the mineral kingdom! Then, when we think of the voiceless air and of the immense, silent and, to us, untrod spaces that fill most of the universe visible to us, we can see that the humble dust under our feet represents an immense graduated advance over what, to us, is a void.

In the seemingly infinite gradations of beings making up the universe, we call those *men* who have attained perfection in action "Adepts." Adepts are *facts* in Nature, and ideals for men to emulate. This emulation consists in studying to know one's self, and in working for Humanity. As we learn more and more of the philosophy that these Adepts first *tested,* then formulated and preserved, and finally presented to the world through H. P. Blavatsky, we find ourselves gradually growing in human stature. Despite recurrent failures, despite interims of passivity, perhaps even despite wayward wandering, we find ourselves becoming better human beings.

The ability to improve one's nature a little proves the ability to continue improvement. Given the process of reincarnation, there is no necessary stopping-point save the "perfection" of *this* Great Day of evolution. This is the "logic" of the doctrine of perfectibility. It becomes fact for those who attain.

PERFECTED MEN

Back of all the religions that ever have been, there is the record, the tradition, of some great Personage; and all the many Saviors of different times and peoples taught the same fundamental ideas. This fact suggests that there is a body of Men, of perfected men, product of past civilizations and evolution, our Elder Brothers, in fact, who have acquired and are the Custodians of the knowledge and experience gained through aeons of time. Their knowledge is actually the very Science of Life, for it enters into every department of existence, of nature. They know the natures and processes of the beings below man, and above man, as we know the processes of ordinary every-day experience. This knowledge they have preserved and recorded, and they have the memory of it, just as we have the memory of yesterday's experiences and events.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

ON THE LOOKOUT

Modifications of Medical Opinion

As has before been remarked, it is neither the purpose nor the delight of a theosophical student to point out the many tragedies resulting from medical oversimplification. Inevitably, however, an examination of human nature which begins with the assumption of delicate plasticity for each physical constituent of the "soul-sheath," comes into conflict with a purely chemical approach to bodily therapy. Thus the dubiety felt by most theosophical students regarding any medical innovations which appear to tamper with the "natural balance" of personal, physical Karma. And if the theosophical perspective is correct—if the "seven principles of man" will prove in greater measure demonstrable with the passing years—revisions of medical opinion will increase.

Especially in the area of immunization and blood transfusion do factors relating to the "astral realm" come into focus, and Lookout has frequently listed admissions on the part of leading members of the medical profession that "hidden" and still mysterious dangers attend the too confident administration of such specifics.

"New Drugs may Cause Cell Damage"

A United Press dispatch, as printed in the Pasadena *Independent* (June 21) under the above title, reviews a current investigation to determine whether "any of today's new drugs can cause far-reaching cell damage":

> If such damage is being done by new drugs and chemicals the consequences "might well be far greater and more insidious than those posed by atomic energy," said Dr. G. B. Wilson, associate professor of botany and plant pathology at MSU [Michigan State University].
>
> Wilson's research, involving tests of scores of new drugs, stems from a conviction that not enough is known about possible ultimate effects of the growing number of drugs being marketed to fight disease.
>
> A serious question raised, he said, is whether any harmful changes can result which can be inherited.

Interference with Cell Division

According to Dr. Wilson, an alteration of natural organic balance causes the stoppage of normal cell division in plants. Moreover, such

changes may lead to hereditary defects—and if true with plant and animal, this may also be true of man.

The U.P. report continues:

> Wilson has grouped scores of drugs, depending on reactions produced in treated plants, into four categories—each with its own set of expected or possible results.
>
> Drugs in one group stop cells from completing the process of division. If the drug is withdrawn, growth can continue, but some cells appear to have changed hereditary potential.
>
> Another group is composed of drugs which can stop cells from beginning the division process. If the drugs are withdrawn, growth can continue normally. In neither of these two groups, however, would cells duplicate if the dosage is above the "critical" level.
>
> A third group of drugs appears to leave no damage which can be passed on through heredity. But they do cause abnormality in the organism, such as a twisted plant, bumps on the stem or twisted leaves.
>
> A fourth group of drugs causes no visible change in growth of either organism or cells, but inheritable changes are detectable in the brain of the cell. Damage here, Wilson said, is similar to that resulting from X-rays.

"Blood Can Kill"

Pageant for last January carries a startling article of this title by Lawrence Galton, who summarizes the many dangers attending blood transfusions. As Mr. Galton points out, "the first flush of enthusiasm for transfusions is waning," as a greater number of doctors become acquainted with the serious hazards involved. Not only are there adverse effects from many transfusions—with causes undetermined—but a carelessly given transfusion may "temporize" with the disease, as in the case of hidden cancer, and lead to fatality. Or—who knows?—to the seeds of a new "disease."

Mr. Galton's forthright report begins with the following statistics:

> Every year now, three and one-half million transfusions are given. And one death occurs in every 1,000 to 3,000. These are the properly-labeled deaths. Many others, authorities suspect, are actually due to transfusions, but the blame is fastened elsewhere. And far more often than they kill, transfusions cause reactions which are unpleasant and sometimes serious.
>
> As far back as 1951, the New England Journal of Medicine was warning against abuse in the use of blood transfusions. Bluntly, it declared: "The administration of blood without adequate clinical indication is as condemnable a practice as unnecessary surgery."

Warnings from High Authority

> In 1953, alarmed over the spread of a serious and sometimes fatal form of jaundice through excessive use of transfusions, a committee of medical experts appointed by the U. N. World Health Organization warned doctors that "many nonessential transfusions . . . are given."
>
> "The nonchalant use of blood should be viewed with great concern," declared the Journal of the Kentucky State Medical Association in August 1954, "since blood transfusions have a higher mortality rate than appendectomy."
>
> A year ago, an American Journal of Clinical Pathology report declared: "It is probable that occasionally deaths directly attributable to blood transfusions are not recognized as such but are blamed on the underlying disease."

Cosmetic Transfusions

In Mr. Galton's opinion, and in the opinion of the foregoing authorities, "some doctors have worked on a completely erroneous theory that transfusion would do no harm and might possibly benefit the patient. They have given cosmetic transfusions to patients with normal hemoglobins and red cell counts just in the vague hope that they might feel better and think something was being done for them."

The presently administering doctors, themselves, of course, are not entirely to blame, since the age of "miracle cures" creates a high demand for treatment from uninformed laymen. Sometimes patients, deciding a transfusion would be "good" for them, insist that they receive it—arguing that "because they've deposited blood in the bank, they're entitled to get some use out of it."

An Uncommon Fever

Among the many obvious dangers given insufficient attention is that arising from the transfusion of contaminated, stored blood. As blood ages, Mr. Galton reveals, a natural bacteria-checking property is lost, while the bacteria themselves may multiply, yet escape detection by cursory tests.

A common result of normal transfusions, according to Mr. Galton, is that of chills and fever, which, though not serious in observable effect, tend to ensure that the patient will derive very little benefit.

> One of the mildest transfusion reactions is the pyrogenic. It's distressing enough, though, to both patient and doctor. It starts with chills, followed by fever, usually occurring during or shortly after the

> transfusion. It lasts several hours. Fortunately, there is usually no serious after-effect. There is some evidence, however, that a patient who gets a pyrogenic reaction when he gets a transfusion, benefits very little from the transfusion.

In conclusion, Mr. Galton stresses the fact that transfusions are not usually needed in small blood losses, since a healthy man can lose two pints of blood without adverse effect. It therefore appears that the natural "go slow" inclination of the Theosophist, who favors the least possible tampering with nature, is a true policy of discretion.

BRIDEY MURPHY—FINALE?

It may be too soon to say that the craze for hypno-regression inspired by Morey Bernstein's *The Search for Bridey Murphy* is over, but it is certain that only the most tenacious believers still regard the disjointed reminiscences of Bridey as a genuine case of reincarnation. Of the three possible explanations supplied by Theosophic doctrine, most impartial investigators have now settled upon the last and simplest—that "Bridey" was a simple construct, combining hypnotist Bernstein's *desire* to prove reincarnation with deeply buried childhood memories of "Ruth Simmons." An "exposé" series produced late in May for the Chicago *American,* and reported widely throughout the country, discloses that the names and details arising from Bridey's hypnotic trance have, in various instances, been shown to have been known to Mrs. Simmons when she was a child. The articles for the Chicago *American* were written by the Rev. Wally White, who investigated Mrs. Simmons' Chicago childhood. The series begins with the following notation:

> The investigation was launched after it was learned Mrs. Simmons had attended Sunday School as a girl in the Reverend White's church. Reporters for the Chicago *American* have found and talked with many of Mrs. Simmon's relatives and friends both in Chicago and in Wisconsin, her birthplace. They have uncovered many remarkable similarities in events and personalities associated with Mrs. Simmons and her 19th Century Irish counterpart, Bridey Murphy.

HYPNO-TRANSFERENCE

Though no question arises as to the sincerity of either Mrs. Simmons or hypnotist Bernstein, we have, in this instance, an excellent illustration of why scientific probity and caution should be used to the nth degree in all such cases. The Rev. White's article continues:

Bridey Murphy had an "Uncle" Plazz in 19th Century Ireland.

Ruth Simmons, her 20th Century American alter ego, had one too —right in Chicago!

Bridey's "Plazz" was the uncle of her husband, Brian, she related in one of her hypnotic regressions into a "previous existence."

Ruth's "Plazz" was a good friend and neighbor of her own aunt and uncle with whom she lived on Chicago's North Side. "Uncle Plazz" was actually the name Ruth called him. She liked him very much, her Chicago relatives say. And he loved her, he told the Chicago *American,* "like one of my daughters."

This is only one of the numerous incidents of similarity which we have uncovered in the lives of the mysterious Bridey and the young Pueblo, Colo. housewife who six times reverted into the obliging Irish lass under a hypnotic trance.

A Memorized Irish Brogue

Reporters from the Chicago *American* subsequently ascertained that Mrs. Simmons played two Irish roles in school dramatics and learned a fairly authentic brogue as an accompaniment of her parts. Further, Mrs. Simmons' relatives are now able to recall incidents which took place during her early childhood and were subsequently forgotten,—only later dredged from the storehouse of the subconscious memory by hypnosis. The most striking factual identification concerns a vividly recalled spanking, supposedly, according to "Bridey's" story, in 1802. Under hypnosis, Mrs. Simmons, as "Bridey," talked about having a tantrum, during which she scratched most of the paint from the frame of her metal bed. However, investigation shows that iron bedsteads were not introduced into Ireland until at least 1850, while her aunt, in listening to the tape-recording of the trance-recital, recalled that Ruth had treated a metal bed in just such a cavalier manner in Chicago and had been spanked for it. The confident investigators now assert that "there is nothing in the Bridey Murphy story that cannot be explained either as coincidence or as the subconscious memory."

Humiliation and Confusion

The whole highly publicized episode has imposed a severe strain upon Mrs. Simmons, herself, and she has been reported as humiliated and deeply regretful of it all. Her emotional stability has been questioned and analyzed by dozens of psychiatrists, and it has not been possible to maintain the original anonymity gained from the "Ruth Simmons" pseudonym. For Mrs. Simmons, therefore, and for many

others caught up in the net of intrigue and fascination, the subject of reincarnation will probably forever remain unpleasant. It is possible that some, to whom the *thought* of reincarnation came by this means for the first time, will retain the effects of whatever philosophical speculation was thus induced. But there can be little doubt that even the most ardent reincarnationist will now incline more to the established theosophical view—that reincarnation is not likely to be susceptible of proof by phenomenal means. And arguments about data and details, especially as they become heated, always tend to obscure the broad implications of rebirth-theory.

REVIEW

Lookout, on the basis of the as yet unchallenged report, first suggested the possibility that Mrs. Simmons' hypnotic trance may have enabled her to "pick up," perhaps at birth, a tenuous psycho-astral sheath, remnant of someone else's former incarnation—the lapse of years between the two supposed lives being insufficient to allow the same ego to be reborn with physical memories of the nature described. Another possibility given consideration was that the hypnotic trance corresponded to conditions established during spiritualist séance, with Mrs. Simmons acting as the unconscious medium through which the "shell" of a departed woman was able to speak. It is not inconceivable, despite the complete assurance of the psychologists, that some factors of this sort may have been combined with the childhood memories and tendencies of Ruth Simmons in this life. Doubtless, peculiar communications, both by way of hypnosis and through séances, will continue to interest wonder-seekers, and some will fit these two classifications.

CONTEMPORARY NOTES ON BUDDHA

Throughout the Eastern world, the 2500th anniversary of Gautama Buddha's passing has been an occasion of considerable moment. Formation of a Buddhist World Council, for instance, is an omen of significance. And the May *Theosophical Movement,* published by ULT affiliates of THEOSOPHY in Bombay, India, devotes its entire issue to articles dealing with the *universal* influence of Gautama. The *Aryan Path,* another well-known Bombay publication of Theosophical overtone, opens its May number with three articles on Buddha's influence.

One of these, "Buddhism—Its Influence on the Life and Culture of India," by Dr. S. Haldar, mentions a point given attention in the "Notes

on the Dhammapada" series currently appearing in THEOSOPHY—that Gautama was a man capable of joyousness as well as of serenity. The *AP* editors preface Dr. Haldar's discussion with these remarks:

> Gautama Buddha's Teachings are myriad-sided. That he has been the teacher of not only the True and the Good but also the Beautiful is not universally recognized.
>
> It is recorded that on one occasion Ananda said to the Master: "The half of the holy life, Lord, it is the friendship with what is lovely." "Say not so, Ananda! Say not so, Ananda! It is the whole, not the half of the holy life. Of a brother so blessed with fellowship with what is lovely we may expect this."

"HE KNOWS BEAUTY"

> Again, once the Master was charged: "Gotama the recluse and his brethren have gone astray. For Gotama the recluse teaches this: 'When one reaches up to the Release, called Beautiful, and having reached it abides therein, at such a time he regards the Whole (Universe) as ugly." "But I never said that, Bhaggava. This is what I do say: 'Whenever one reaches up to the Release, called the Beautiful, then he knows indeed what Beauty is'."
>
> The world looks upon the Master as embodying the True and the Good; it is necessary to emphasize the fact that all his sayings and all his acts are simple, sublime and beautiful. His silence, his smile, his dignity are expressions of Beauty. No wonder that Buddhist art and architecture—the glories of Ajanta, of Sanchi, and other places —have left a lasting impression on all lovers of the beautiful.

DISTINCTIONS AND DIFFERENCES IN BUDDHISM

And yet, for Westerners and Eastern Buddhists as well, the Teacher seems to preach retreat from life! It is apparently inevitable that any teaching, when guarded by official custodians, acquires rigidities of interpretation and even entirely different "feeling-tones." The idea of *active* compassion as the highest ideal of the *Nirmanakaya,* for instance, appears in Northern, though not in Southern Buddhism. On the other hand, so great was the spiritual influence of Buddha that creedal differences have never passed into violent factionalism. The success of the Buddhist World Council is a manifest of this—taking a position much like that of H. P. Blavatsky when she wrote that "real Buddhism can be appreciated only by blending the philosophy of the Southern Church and the metaphysics of the Northern Schools. If one seems too iconoclastic and stern, and the other too metaphysical . . . it is entirely due to the popular expression of Buddhism in both Churches."

The common thread for both Northern and Southern Buddhism is the essentially Theosophic core of each—a point made clear by an article first printed in 1921 in the opening issue of *The Eastern Buddhist,* itself a true precursor of the present Buddhist World Council. There a Western "convert," Beatrice L. Suzuki, wrote:

> In India both schools of thought lived side by side for some time, but later the separation became more marked as the Mahayana teaching travelled North and East with Sanskrit as its medium and the Hinayana remained stationary, geographically and intellectually in the South.
>
> Let us not forget however the similarities between the two. These are: the idea of impermanency of all things, karma, rebirth, the law of cause and effect, the middle path, the prevalence of sorrow and ignorance, the possibility of attainment, and the reality when attained of Nirvana, which is the dispersion forever of sorrow, suffering, and ignorance.

A Blending

While popular Buddhism, both Northern and Southern, embodies creedal differences, all such divisions have been more philosophically considered than the separations of doctrine in the Christian churches. There having been no bloodshed, ever, in the Buddhist world, we have proof that Buddha was, as H.P.B. remarked, "a universal teacher."

Since Buddhism is a subject of much commentary in H.P.B.'s major works, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine,* students of Theosophy often find themselves desirous of establishing clear distinctions between the emphases of Hinayana and Mahayana teachings. Beatrice Suzuki's article is useful for this purpose, particularly in establishing the fact that all Buddhist differences are those of *emphasis*:

> According to the Mahayanists, the teachings of Hinayana are but the beginning of the Buddha's instruction and the Mahayanist teachings the extension of the Buddha's doctrine pushed to the end, not content to stop where the Hinayana does. The teachers of Mahayana explain that the development of doctrine corresponds to the successive periods of the Buddha's life after his enlightenment, the Hinayana teachings belonging to the first part of his preaching activity. There were other periods of his life and in each period his teaching unfolded itself more fully. The Mahayanists revere the great Buddha Shakyamuni, but they also revere certain great Buddhist sages, who, seeing into the heart and spirit of the Buddha's teaching, reflected upon it, and matured it.

The True Teaching—Simple, Ethical

> Scholars and adherents of the Hinayana school deny this and assert that the Mahayanists had no right to do this, that the simple ethical teaching of the Hinayana was the direct doctrine of the Buddha. Some scholars claim that the Hinayana teachings are the true primitive Buddhism, but as practised in Southern countries this is not quite true. There are different sects among the Hinayanists, and one of their sects, the Mahasanghika, is in many respects more in agreement with the Mahayana than with the Hinayana. The Buddhism of Burma also has many points of contact with Mahayana.

Different Emphasis on Immortality

Devotees of the Hinayana school feel that Buddha's deliberate avoidance of the question of individual immortality reflected the teacher's concern for the delusions and pitfalls awaiting disciples who are anxious about their *personal* fortune in other existences. Thus the origin of the incorrect Western notion that Buddhists *deny* immortality. As Mrs. Suzuki indicates, "the Hinayana will not discuss the ultimate metaphysics and philosophy." She suggests that the aim is to "escape the metempsychosis of rebirth and death for the sake of entering into the tranquillity of Nirvana." The teaching of Bodhisattva characteristic of the Mahayana School, however, is also the teaching of Theosophy. The great teacher attains Nirvana inwardly (see Notes on the *Dhammapada,* this issue) and continues to work in the world and for the world. Mrs. Suzuki, while disapproving excesses in metaphysical speculation, points out that "metempsychosis in itself is no evil, and Nirvana in its coma is not productive of any good. And as long as there are souls groaning in pain, the Bodhisattva cannot rest in Nirvana; there is no rest for his unselfish heart, so full of love and sympathy, until he leads all his fellow-beings to the eternal bliss of Buddhahood. To reach this end he employs innumerable means (*upaya*) suggested by his disinterested loving-kindness."

Doctrine of the Dharmakaya

In Northern Buddhism this term means not only vesture or body attained by a perfect Buddha, but also signifies "vesture made universal." In fact, according to the teachings of the *Avatamsaka Sutra* we have here something corresponding to the Universal Principle of H.P.B.'s First Fundamental Proposition. The following paragraph from the *Avatamsaka Sutra* is particularly illustrative on this score and reads as follows:

> The Dharmakaya, while manifesting itself in the triple world, is free from impurities and evil desires. It unfolds itself here, there, and everywhere responding to the call of karma. It is not an individual reality, it is not a false existence, but is universal and pure. It comes from nowhere, it goes to nowhere: it does not assert itself, nor is it subject to annihilation. It is forever serene and eternal. It is the one, devoid of all determinations. This Body of Dharma has no boundary, no quarters, but is embodied in all bodies. Its freedom and spontaneity is incomprehensible, its spiritual presence in things corporeal is incomprehensible. All forms of corporeality are involved therein, it is able to create all things. Assuming any concrete material body as required by the nature and condition of karma, it illuminates all creations. Though it is the store-house of intelligence, it is void of particularity. There is no place in the universe where this Dharmakaya does not prevail. The universe becomes, but this forever remains. It is free from all opposites and contraries, yet it is working in all things to lead them to Nirvana.

RECENT CANCER RESEARCH FINDINGS

Business Week, June 23, reports that Dr. Wendell M. Stanley, of the University of California, "believes that certain long-held arguments against the virus theory of cancer are crumbling." For example, Dr. Stanley's research shows that "the virus theory of cancer ties in neatly with many recent findings in research on carcinogens—or substances that produce or generate cancer. Suspected carcinogens range from hundreds of different chemical to physical agents such as ultraviolet or X-irradiation." *Business Week* continues:

> It has long been known that cancer could result from prolonged exposure to coal tar—that observation, in fact, set off the extensive searches for particular compounds as cancer villains. But most researchers assumed that the carcinogen caused changes in the cell itself. Only recently did a growing band of scientists start to rally around the idea that the chemical carcinogen could be working, not by affecting the genetic apparatus of the cell, but by activating or causing a mutation in the virus already in the cell.
>
> This view ties in with the observation that leukemia and skin cancer may result from excess radiation exposure at a relatively low level over a period of years. Cancer resulting from radiation may show up immediately or up to a few years after exposure.

Thus, it is again pointed out that the long-term effects of such "calculated intrusions" as X-irradiation can cause curious combinations. This broad conclusion seems undeniable, whether one holds to the germ theory of disease or not, and whether one is discussing innoculation, blood transfusion, or irradiation.